

The impact of social media on young people's lives

Over the past few years, the evolution of the internet has become an inseparable part of people's lives. As technology continues to develop, social media has taken over many aspects of human lives. It had become so incredibly essential to the point where it is nearly impossible to maintain a daily life without keeping in touch via social media. "3/4 of all 7 – 12th graders say they have a profile on a social networking site" (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Despite having major impacts on people's lives, it can also become the downfall of society. Numerous studies have shown that the virtual world created by social media has manifested a concerning number of negative impacts on people's lives, especially adolescents. The purpose of this essay is to discuss more about the **negative side of social media and analyze the reasons why young people are bound to use it.** ①

Social media brings a considerable amount of benefits for young people's lives, **however, as any** other invention, social media can be a double-edged sword. Contrary to popular belief, the number of disadvantages that come from social media outweigh the number of advantages. Many research studies have been conducted to establish **how social media has become a major distraction.** According to Lauren Angelastro from the Eastside Online (2015), **student spend most of their time online**, she said: "Another common distraction that has only recently evolved would be social media and the internet. As social media is becoming so much more popular, students all over the country and in various grades spend a large amount of their time communicating online." Whether students are going to school or staying at home, they constantly find the opportunity to update their social media. ②
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One of many concerns regarding social media issues is that social media distract young people from real problems in their lives by feeding them with meaningless entertainment. For example, Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service with millions of users. Since Instagram is a massive platform, users can experience variety of entertainment and leisure. As addicting as it is, Instagram **promotes false depiction of other people** while simultaneously provide irrelevant and inappropriate information. "High levels of anxiety, depression, FOMO, or 'the fear of missing out'" (MacMillan, Time 2017) is a main problem with Instagram use. This is because girls compare their real bodies to the filtered one on social media. ①

Social media provides students with another identity which allows them to have different personalities when they access any type of platforms. Online persona is one of the many reasons why students get addicted to the internet. It allows students to become a different person and enter the virtual world where the **consequences of their actions** will not affect them as much as in real life. Students are easily drawn to social media due to the endless amounts of entertainment. It provide students with a temporary sense of comfort in order to distract themselves from the pressure of their daily lives. Research shows that **whenever a notification alert comes from the phone**, most of the time the immediate response is to check the phone. Even if people purposely ignore the notification, it can still distract their minds (Robinson Meyer, The Atlantic, 2015). **Consequently**, this action constantly interfering with students lives and it affects their productivity. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation (Kaitlyn E.May, Anatasia D.Elder, Springer Link, 2010), "media use is the dominant way adolescents and young adult spends their time". ④
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Social media usage affects both **efficiency** and welfare. The daily number of hours students spend on social media is approximately 7.5 hours a day, which is almost the equivalent in length of a full working day. **In addition**, students will not use one single social media application at a time but they continuously switch between many different social media content. By using many social media applications simultaneously, students have increased media absorption up to 10 hours a day, which is nearly a whole day. Texting, tweeting, checking Instagram, when students are studying makes them less productive. The temptation of social media restrain even the most efficient multitasker. At Middle Tennessee State University, professor Brook had conducted a research where students “watch a video on a computer but also leave tabs open for a few social media sites”. The result shows that students who use the social media sites more “did not perform as well as those who use them less” (Emma De Vita, Financial Times, 2015). Professors Brook came to a conclusion that: “Inefficiencies in task performance can result from the time spent on the interruption and the challenge in mentally returning to the primary task,”. In this society, it is unrealistic for students to completely abandon social media. Nevertheless, young people are bound to be distract by social media.

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In conclusion, social media can pose serious damage to young people’s productivity. However, if young people are able to manage their social media usage responsibly, the negative effect of social media can be reduce. In today’s society, social media is one of many necessities therefore it would be difficult to give it up entirely.

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